

Apparel Export Promotion Council

Ace apparel brands endorse growing trust for Made in India readymade garments (RMG) globally; brands ready to source more from India

- *Brands suggest building capacity for processing houses & availability of MMF fabrics to push India's exports*
- *Sweaters most sought after item by the global brands from India*
- *Bharat Tex helping brand India's textiles products globally*

28th January 2025, New Delhi/Gurugram: AEPC organized a roundtable discussion with the major apparel brands at Hotel the Oberoi in New Delhi on 23rd January 2025. The Meeting was chaired by Shri Rohit Kansal Additional Secretary, Ministry of Textiles. Shri Sudhir Sekhri, Chairman AEPC, presided over the meeting. Shri Premal Udani Chairman EP, Shri Mithileshwar Thakur SG AEPC and the industry representatives Shri Harish Ahuja from Shahi Exports, Shri Virender Uppal from Richa Global Exports Pvt Ltd and Shri HKL Magu from Jyoti Apparels also shared their viewpoints during the meeting.

The representatives of top fashion houses including Tendam Global Fashion, Impulse, Kas group Asia. LiverPool India, Superdry PLC, New Times, Global Sourcing, JCPenney, Triburg, Source Net Global, etc. attended the meeting and shared their perspective and road ahead to reach 40 billion USD of RMG exports by 2030.

Addressing the participants, Shri Kansal noted that, "A stable and supportive policy environment at the central level coupled with a strong set of incentives offered by the states had created a virtuous cycle favouring investments and growth. With at least 4 PM MITRA Parks set to allot land to investors in this quarter, investors could look forward to a robust ecosystem with plug and play facilities."

Shri Kansal made a special mention of Bharat Tex, India's global textile show and appealed to all the major global brands present in the roundtable to actively participate in Bharat Tex 2025 and invest in the Brand India story. He suggested brands to extract maximum value out of the show. He also said that Bharat Tex is helping Indian brands in the overseas market.

Chairman AEPC in his address stated that, "This edition of Bharat Tex has received phenomenal response from the participants and we are oversubscribed. The buyer's response is also quite encouraging."

Speaking on the target of reaching 40 billion USD of RMG exports by 2030 Shri Sekhri said, "It is an uphill task though industry is making all possible efforts. The question is not whether business will come to India, but whether we can handle the incoming business orders with existing capacity?" He asked brands to flag what we need from the government. Shri Sekhri urged the government to introduce reforms in Indian labor laws, improve schemes for skilling the workforce and make policy for fabric import flexible and industry friendly.

Shri Premal Udani, Chairman Export Promotion Committee AEPC said, "Exporters and buyers are two wheels and one cannot do without the other. Promotion cannot happen without support of brands. Our RMG exports are growing from the past few months. Though a lot of business happens in Asia and almost 80% of exports earnings of Bangladesh comes from RMG, India is yet to catch up."

The brands leaders said that we are too much fashion driven and if India has to upscale then the need is to get into the core manufacturing. Product integrity and consistency in quality is very important to upscale exports.

India's biggest strength is its design prowess and raw material base and it must be leveraged. The value-added products must be focused upon to leverage India's strengths, brands representatives suggested.

Among the major asks of brands is the need for building capacity and fast-tracking manufacturing. Also, the skilled labor shortage which is hampering India's growth story needs to be addressed. Brand leaders also suggested that FTAs are working in our favor and orders have grown in volume.

Brands unequivocally endorsed that this is India's time and for the first time it feels that opportunities are real and industry is all poised to take this advantage. The brand's spokesperson also suggested expanding India's product categories and matching it with the global demand. India needs to work on outerwear to increase its demand. They also suggested industry to be flexible and cater to even the smaller demand.

Many brands suggested sweaters to be the most sought-after item from India in recent times and we must make the industry ready to cater to this rising demand. India's export of sweaters to the world in FY 2024-25 (April-November) was 11.45 million.

Brands also suggested industry to go for automation and work on the global compliances to scale the exports. Also, India must work on faster lead time and work to improve inbound and outbound logistics. Faster clearances on the ports can help in faster delivery which brands look for while sourcing their products.

Among the major gaps highlighted by the brands for India is the lack of processing houses. They suggested offering incentives for setting up processing units.

Shri Mithileshwar Thakur, Secretary General AEPC in his concluding remark said, "We have been growing in double digits since the last few months despite global challenges. Also, we have registered impressive growth with almost all our FTA partner countries in recent months. This growth is on account of supportive government policies, industry's increasing effort towards compliances and India's improved brand image due to initiatives like Bharat Tex."